

**Dopamine Menus**

Allison Krabill

**SESSION SUMMARY**

A dopamine menu is a personalized list of activities, tasks, or experiences that make you happy. The purpose of a dopamine menu is to use it when you need a break or a mental pick-me-up.

Dopamine menus are a way to get staff thinking and talking about ways they can give themselves a pick-me-up when things get hard at camp.

**TIME NEEDED**

30 minutes

**MATERIALS**

| **Material** | **Quantity** | **Progress Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Something to write with & something to write on | 1 per team member |  |
| [Handouts](https://39909885.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/39909885/DOPAMINE%20MENU.pdf) (Optional) | 1 per person |  |

**THE PLAN**

**Part 1:** Introducing the Menu

Dopamine menus can include:

* Starters - Things that take 10-15 minutes, like going on a short walk
  + Quick walk
  + Quick stretching
  + Changing your location
  + Gratitude journal
* Mains - Things that take about an hour, like playing a board game
  + Exercise
  + Cooking or baking
  + Reading
  + Going out with a friends
* Sides - Things you can do while doing something else, like listening to a playlist
  + Listening to a podcast
  + Coloring or drawing
  + Knitting/crocheting
  + Movement
* Desserts - Things that are good in moderation, like scrolling social media
  + Reddit
  + Binge watching shows
  + Alcohol/drugs
  + Special treats
* Specials - Things that take a while and happen infrequently, like vacation
  + Concerts
  + Buying something nice for you or someone else
  + Trip to nearby waterfall, amusement park, etc.
* Salads - Things that you don’t really want to do but you know will make you feel good
  + Workout
  + Meal prepping
  + This one was suggested by [Makela Elvy](https://www.linkedin.com/in/makela-elvy-m-ed-0b417649/)
* Night Time Snacks - Things that help you wind down for the night, like staying off your phone
  + Comfy PJs
  + Face washing routine
  + Nighttime playlist

**Part 2:** Small Group Brainstorm

Have groups throw out as many ideas as possible for each category. Green hatting here is great. No need to debate where things fit – we’re just helping each other generate ideas.

**Part 3:** Making the Menus

Have each person make their own menu. Encourage them to take a picture or find another way to keep it.

We have a [menu template](https://39909885.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/39909885/Free%20Resources/DOPAMINE%20MENU%20(1).pdf) you can download here, or they can make their own!

*Dopamine menus were popularized by Jessica McCabe of* [*How to ADHD*](https://howtoadhd.com/) *and Eric Tivers of* [*ADHD reWired*](https://www.adhdrewired.com/)*,*